

House Republican Press Release

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Noujaim Testifies on Municipal Water Plan



Legislator Makes It Clear: Waterbury Residents Should Decide

HARTFORD- State Representative Selim Noujaim (R-Waterbury) testified today at a public hearing of the Connecticut General Assembly's Public Health Committee on a proposed bill that would establish a Municipal Water Authority.

"I encourage the committee to retain intact the two words that I consider most important in this resolution, 'enabling' and 'referendum.' To the citizens of the city of Waterbury, such expressions are meant to empower our municipal leaders and local taxpayers to define their own destiny and the manner by which pension liabilities would be fully funded in the future," said Representative Noujaim before the committee. "Anything short of allowing the people of Waterbury to make those decisions would not be appropriate.

"The city of Waterbury is truly blessed with an asset consistent with its water resources, as well as the land and properties associated with such resources. I would be concerned if the power of the authority is extended to dispose of land, property, and such assets by the sale and/or long-term lease to an outside enterprise. Such an action could have a demoralizing effect on the people of our city. The citizens of Waterbury must have a say before any of these decisions are made.

"With the creation of such an authority comes a reduction in property taxes coupled with an increase in water fees. It is essential that a comparison be made and explained to demonstrate how the increase in water and (perhaps sewer) rates would be offset to a larger degree by a reduction in taxes, not over the next five years, but over the next twenty years and more. I am certain that the city administration will secure adequate public hearings and gathering of public opinion so that the citizens of Waterbury will be fully informed."